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## Two Papers.

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*Partitives after Numerals in Hebrew.*

I SUPPOSE that whenever a numeral in the construct is followed by the name of the objects numbered, this dependent noun might be called a partitive, although it would not always be translated as such into English. I wish at present to consider only such genitives and other constructions as would best be translated into English by a partitive expression.

There are two ways in which the partitive relation after numerals may be expressed.

In the first place the whole, of which the given number is a part, may be made dependent upon the preposition **מִן**. In this case the expression should, to be complete, contain a repetition of the noun denoting the whole or a substitute for it. A good example of the exacter form of this construction is **נַעֲרֵי־אֶחָד מִהַנְּעָרִים**, 1 Sam. xxv, 14; of the less exact **שִׁבְעָה אַנְשִׁים מִבְּנָיו**, 2 Sam. xxi, 6. See also 2 Kings iv, 1; xxv, 19; Ru. iv, 2.

The noun is, as a matter of fact, rarely thus repeated. Indeed, the examples cited are all in which I have found the units. The briefer form, with **מִן** and a single noun or a pronoun, however, is very common, especially after *one*. The following are a few of the examples in which this numeral appears: **אֶחָד מִהַנְּעָרִים**, 1 Sam. xvi, 18; **אֶחָד מִהַנְּעָרִים**, 1 Sam. ix, 13; **הָאֶחָד מִן־הַחֲתָנִים**, Lev. xiv, 30; **אֶחָד מִשְׁבְּטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Jud. xxi, 8; **אֶחָד מֵאֵלֶּה**, 2 Kings iii, 11; **אֶחָד מִלֶּךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Lev. v, 4; **אֶחָד מִן־הַעֲרִים הָאֵלֶּה**, Deut. iv, 42; **אֶחָד מִמֶּנּוּ**, Gen. iii, 22; **אֶחָד מִצִּלְעָתָיו**, Gen. ii, 21; **אֶחָד מִשְׁתֵּי עֵינָיו**, Jud. xvi, 28. These are the varieties found. There are more than fifty (53) instances in all.

There are fewer examples with other units. The following are all that I have noticed: **שְׁלֹשָׁה מֵהַשְּׁלִישִׁים**, 1 Chr. xi, 15 (see 2 Sam. xxiii, 13); **מִכֶּם חֲמִשָּׁה**, Lev. xxvi, 8; **חֲמִשָּׁה מִן־הַסּוּסִים**, 2 Kings vii, 13; **שֵׁשָׁה מִשְׁמַתָּם**, Ex. xxviii, 10. Perhaps I ought to add to these three or four other passages, *viz.*: Gen. vi, 19 and 20; vii, 15; Jer. iii, 14; in which the noun denoting the whole is a collective.

Observe with reference to this construction, that it is perfectly unambiguous. There can be no doubt that the number expressed by the numeral are only a part of the whole expressed by the noun or pronoun following the preposition.

The second of the two constructions for the partitive relation is that in which the whole is a genitive immediately dependent upon the numeral. There are many illustrations of this idiom with the numeral *one*. One of them seems to be an attempt to parallel the fuller form of the construction with **מִן**. It is **פַּחַת אֶחָד עֶבְרִי מִן** **אֲדָנִי הַקְּטָנִים**, 2 Kings xviii, 24, and Isa. xxxvi, 9. All the rest are of a briefer form. The following display the varieties discovered: **אֶחָד שְׁבַטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Gen. xxi, 15; **אֶחָד הַשִּׁיחִים**, Gen. xlix, 16; **אֶחָד הַרְּשִׁים הָרִאשִׁנִּים**, Dan. x, 13; **אֶחָד הָעֵרִים הָאֵלֶּה**, Deut. xix, 5; **אֶחָד שְׁבַטֵיךָ**, Deut. xii, 14. The examples above given show that this construction is used wherever that with **מִן** can be employed, except with pronouns. The number of examples found is about half as great (24) as in the preceding case.

In the phrases thus far cited under this, as under the first, head, there is no room for ambiguity. One of a class, however large or small, described by the dependent noun is intended. The meaning is clear, also, in the only case in which the dependent noun is, correctly or incorrectly, in the singular, **אֶחָת יָדְךָ**, Neh. iv, 11; for, without reference to the context, the position of the numeral shows that the words are to be rendered, not "his one hand," but "one of his hands." When, however, we proceed to examine expressions in which larger units are employed, the meaning is not so easily determined. These numerals may properly precede, and that in the construct, not only the whole of which they represent a part, but also the group of objects to which they give the dimensions. One has, therefore, to rely on sources external to the construction for the means of knowing just what is intended in any particular case. If there are no such sources, one can only guess at what is meant.

Most of the partitive expressions in the Old Testament have been detected and properly rendered by the English translators, but some of them have, I think, been overlooked or neglected. **שְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו**, Gen. xxii, 3, is doubtless properly translated "two of his young men," since we know, from xiv, 14, that Abraham could muster a small army of attendants. **שְׁנֵי בְנֵי־עֵקֶב**, Gen. xxxiv, 25, also, is correctly rendered "two of the sons of Jacob," because, already at this time, the patriarch had a family of eleven male children. **שִׁבְעַת בְּנָיו**, 1 Sam. xvi, 10, too, in harmony with xvii, 12, is expressed in English by "seven of his sons," although 1 Chron. ii, 15 seems to assert that there were but seven, including the absent David. The Great King must, of course, have had more than two chamberlains; indeed, the names of seven such are given in i, 10; hence in Esth. ii, 21, and vi, 2, **שְׁנֵי־סָרִיסֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ** should be translated "two of the king's chamberlains," and it is so rendered. Is it certain that in i, 10 we ought not to say "seven of the chamberlains," or, if "the seven chamberlains" is allowed to remain, to substitute "were ministering" for "ministered," to indicate that only those at the time on duty are intended?

Thus far no fault is to be found with our English version. Is Gen. xlii, 37 correctly translated? Why is Reuben, in replying to his father, made to say, "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee"? According to xlvi, 9 Reuben had four sons when the family moved into Egypt, and he probably had that number before he ever visited the land of the Nile. Why not, then, render **שְׁנֵי בְנָיו**, "two of my sons," especially as by so doing a more definite force is given to the words of the speaker? Does he not mean that, if he fails to restore Benjamin, he will sacrifice *two for one* to assuage the sorrow of his father? and is not this idea better expressed by "two of my sons" than by "my two sons"? The latter expression introduces a suggestion which is contrary to the facts in the case. Reuben has no right to excite our sympathy by implying that he is willing to be made utterly childless if he fails to fulfil his promise.

I do not know how great a man Balaam was, but had I been among the Revisers I should have suggested a change in Num. xxii, 22, where he is represented as being so much less than Abraham that he must empty his house to provide himself with only two servants. Moreover, though this is aside from my purpose, why should **נַעֲרָיו** here be translated "his servants," but in xxii, 3 "his young men"; another slight upon the unfortunate foreigner!

Jud. ix, 44 contains another doubtful translation. In *v.* 43 Abimelech is said to have divided his men into "three companies." In *v.* 44, after an account of what was done by one of these companies, the story is made to continue as follows: "and the two companies," etc., as if there had never been but two in all. Surely "two of the companies" would have been an improvement, and I think that the Revisers would have been justified in using the still more definite expression, "the *other* two companies."

There are cases in which, although the numeral denotes only a part, it is a particular part described in the connection; such passages would be imperfectly translated as partitive in English. Thus Gen. xl, 1 says, "The butler of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their lord the king of Egypt;" hence, in *v.* 2, שני סריסין is properly rendered "his two" and not "two of" "his officers." (Note that סריס is here rendered *officer*, while in Esther it is translated *chamberlain*.) So also, 1 Sam. xxxi, 2, it is said that "the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchisua, the sons of Saul," — better "sons of Saul"; therefore, when, *v.* 6, reference is made to this event, שלשת בניו is correctly rendered "his three sons."

There are a few passages in which the meaning is doubtful. If we knew just how the temple of Dagon at Gaza was constructed, we should be able to decide whether שני עמודי התוך means "the two middle pillars" or "two of the interior pillars"; but at present certainty seems unattainable. How can one tell whether שלשת דרעים, Zach. xi, 8, should be "the three shepherds" or "three of the shepherds"? One might even question whether Ornan, 1 Chr. xxi, 20, had just four sons, or only four with him, when the angel appeared at the threshing-floor. See further 2 Sam. xxi, 8.

The possibilities of the construction under consideration appear in 2 Sam. xv, 27 (see *v.* 36), where שני בניכם means neither "your two sons" nor "two of your sons," but "the sons of you two," *i.e.* a son of each of the two.

*Isaiah* viii, 20.

THIS brief verse, every word of which is, in itself, perfectly intelligible, has given translators and commentators no end of trouble, and no one yet seems to have satisfactorily explained what the prophet means when he says :

לְתוֹרָה וּלְתַעֲוָדָה אִם-לֹא יֹאמְרוּ כְּדִבְרֵי הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר  
אֵינָם שׂוֹחֵרִים;

The Septuagint<sup>1</sup> and the Peshitto<sup>2</sup> agree with each other in their treatment of the relative, making it refer to הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה. They also agree in a very interesting mistake, for both of them render שָׁחַר by the equivalent of שָׁחַר. The Septuagint seems further to have mistaken לְתַצְוֶה for לְצֹוֹרָה.

The other authorities most frequently consulted differ essentially from the two above quoted. They form two general classes, distinguished by the way in which they understand **אם-לא**. By some these words are rendered "if not," and the remainder of the verse is divided into the protasis and apodosis of a conditional sentence. Others translate them "surely," or something equivalent, thus rendering **אשר אי-דלו שחר** to a subordinate relation.

Among those who contend for the conditional force of אִם-כִּי there is this difference, that, while some, with the Vulgate<sup>3</sup> and our Revised Version<sup>4</sup> neglect the relative altogether; others, with Luther<sup>5</sup> and our Authorized Version,<sup>6</sup> supply a verb to give it its supposed significance.

<sup>1</sup> Νόμον γὰρ εἰς βοήθειαν ἔδωκεν, ἵνα εἰπωσιν οὐχ ὥς τὸ ρῆμα τοῦτο, περὶ οὗ οὐκ ἔστιν δῶρα δοῦναι περὶ αὐτοῦ.

2 **خُصَمَاءُ كُفْرًا يَدْعُونَ بِهِ لَعْنَتَنَا وَلَا بَلَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَذْنًا أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ** : وَخُصَمَاءُ

<sup>8</sup> Ad legem magis et ad testimonium! Quod si non dixerint juxta verbum hoc, non erit eis matutina lux.

<sup>4</sup> To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.

<sup>5</sup> Ja, nach dem Gesetz und Zeugnis, Wenn sie dass nicht sagen, so werden sie die Morgenröthe Nicht haben.

<sup>6</sup> To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is because there is* no light in them.

The most of those who translate אִם-לֹא "surely," with Ewald<sup>1</sup> and the margin of our Revision,<sup>2</sup> make אֲשֶׁר refer to the subject of יֹאמְרוּ, and suppose לוֹ equivalent to לָהֶם. So also Delitzsch,<sup>3</sup> who explains אִם-לֹא as an alternative to הֲלֹא of v. 19. Luzzatto, however, renders the relative clause as a descriptive of הִדְבֵּר הַזֶּה. Cheyne translates אֲשֶׁר "when."

The striking thing about nearly all of these interpretations is their ingenuity. One can hardly help feeling them forced, and ask if, then, a more natural rendering would not prove more satisfactory.

Let us attempt a natural construction of the passage.

The meaning of לְתוֹרָה וּלְתַעֲוִיָּה is clear. These words are properly translated: "To law (or instruction) and to testimony," and their relation to v. 16 is apparent. The prophet, in this latter passage, directs or is directed to make a record of his prophetic utterances for preservation among the faithful. To this record, the word of God to them, they are to resort, when, in the midst of the darkness of future misfortune, they may be tempted to seek hope and comfort from wrong sources. Not to the shades of the dead, but to the oracles of the living God, says the prophet, "to law and to testimony."

The phrase אִם-לֹא might, of course, under certain circumstances, mean "or not," and introduce a second question, as Delitzsch, following Knobel, understands it; but, so used, it would denote an alternative, which in this case does not exist. "Should not a people seek unto their God?" and "Will they not speak thus, who are without dawn?" are but two ways of asking the same question. "If not" would also correctly reproduce the Hebrew particles, if there were an apodosis to correspond to the protasis so introduced. The relative אֲשֶׁר, however, in spite of the ingenuity displayed in attempts to remove it, is still in the way of any such translation. There is a third equivalent of these particles which it seems to me better, yes, *perfectly* meets the requirements of the connection. The prophet has just made a solemn and impassioned appeal to his recorded utterances. A declaration with reference to them is to be expected, and an

<sup>1</sup> — "zur lehre und zum orakel!" ja also wird der sagen der keine Morgenröthe hat;

<sup>2</sup> To the teaching and to the testimony: surely according to this word shall they speak, for whom there is no morning.

<sup>3</sup> Zur Gotteslehre und zum Zeugniß! Oder werden nicht also sprechen die welche ohne Morgenroth sind?

emphatic one. Now in the case of such a declaration, if it is negative, it is regularly introduced by **אם לא**; if affirmative, by **אם לא**, like the substance of an oath. There are several instances, both negative and affirmative, in the book of Isaiah, *e.g.* xxii, 14, and *v.* 9. The force of the particles in the verse under discussion seems to me to be precisely that in the latter of the two passages just quoted, "surely."

"Surely they" — but who are "they"? Numerous weighty authorities insist that the subject of the verb **יאמרו** is a class described by the relative clause following, "Those for whom there is no dawn." This interpretation, however, is involved, and should not be adopted until a simpler one has first been thoroughly tested. Moreover, the word **לן**, by which the relative is supplemented, indicates that **אשר** relates, not to a plural, but to a singular antecedent. I claim that this antecedent is **הרבר הזה**, as I will later more fully explain. Granting that the relative clause is not the subject of **יאמרו**, where shall one be found? Who or what may be expected to speak concerning the state of things here described? Why not "law and testimony"? They, at this juncture, represent the prophet, whose words they are. They are his and his Master's witnesses, summoned to testify in vindication of the reality of divine prescience. They "speak," — not "will speak" or "were speaking," but "they speak," with the implication, perhaps, that they have all the time been speaking to the same effect. If it is objected that the subject would thus, though double in form, be but a single conception, and therefore would not require a plural verb, I reply that, being double in form, it *may* have a plural verb, and that is sufficient. See i, 6; xlv, 8.

The phrase **כדבר הזה** is several times in the Old Testament used with reference to words already quoted, *e.g.* 1 Sam. xvii, 30;<sup>1</sup> but it is quite as frequently employed to introduce a quotation. See 1 Sam. xvii, 27.<sup>2</sup> In this passage, as I take it, Isaiah uses these words with reference to the state of things presupposed by *v.* 19 and foretold in his prophecies. "Surely," he says, "they speak after this manner," *i.e.* they describe the condition of the land and its people. This challenge is nothing strange in the mouth of Isaiah. In xxxiv, 16 again he says: "Seek ye out of the book of Jehovah and read."<sup>3</sup>

The reference of **כדבר הזה** to the state of things which the

<sup>1</sup> Other instances of the same construction are found, 1 Sam. ix, 21; Neh. vi, 4 f.

<sup>2</sup> See also Gen. xxxii, 20; 2 Sam. xiv, 3; xvii, 6.

<sup>3</sup> See also xlv, 9 f.; xlviii, 3 ff.



prophet had foretold would not, however, have been clear without the relative clause attached in explanation. That this clause is intended to explain **הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה** appears from the use of **לִי** instead of **לָהֶם**. The word **שָׁחַר**, though not quoted from, was doubtless suggested by Am. v, 20: "Is not the day of Jehovah darkness and not light? yea gloom without brightness in it?" Perhaps Am. iv, 13, in which **שָׁחַר** does occur, was also in mind. At any rate, it seems clear to me that the prophet, feeling the need of a descriptive clause, borrowed the idea, if not the words, of his predecessor. In this view the whole verse would read, literally: "To law and to testimony! surely they speak according to this word, which has no dawn." Or more freely, "To law and to testimony! surely they describe a state of things such as this, which has no dawn."

Not only does this interpretation establish a connection between the twentieth and the preceding verses; it makes the final verses of the chapter more intelligible. They are a continuation and development of the idea of the relative clause, gloom and desperation. "Nay, they shall pass through it, hard-pressed and hungry. And it shall come to pass when they are hungry that they shall be angered, and curse by their king and by their god<sup>2</sup>; but whether they look upward or gaze earthward, lo distress and darkness, the gloom of affliction." Thus the necessity of transposing verses 21 and 22, upon which Cheyne insists, is obviated, and a rational meaning discovered without taking liberties with the sacred text.

I am not aware that any one, unless it be Luzzatto, has explained this verse as I have done. I broach this interpretation, which I had elaborated before I saw a quotation, by Delitzsch, of the Italian's view,<sup>1</sup> hoping that any flaw or fault in it may be detected and made apparent.

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, *in loco*, says, "Luzz. erkl. wahrlich sie sagen solcherlei Rede welche morgenrothlos ist;" but whether "sie" means "law" and "testimony," or the tempters of the faithful, is not clear. I think the latter are intended.

<sup>2</sup> See v. 19.